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SUBJECT: HMG AND OES CONDUCT LONDON CAWT BRIEFING

¶1. Summary. HMG's Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) hosted a briefing on the Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT) on September 19 in London. Representatives from the South African, Brazilian, Czech, German and Canadian embassies attended along with a representative from the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). Hilary Thompson of Defra and Christine Dawson of OES/ETC briefed attendees on CAWT's progress to date and the next steps as it prepares for a ministerial launch in January. Attendees centered their questions on CAWT's structure, the role of developing and developed countries within CAWT, and the language in the draft statement. End Summary.

¶2. Defra hosted a CAWT briefing for representatives from interested embassies and non-governmental organizations on September 19 in London. Janet Kotze, South African High Commission, Marketa Trivkova, Czech Embassy, Martin Kremer, German Embassy, Elizabeth Reid, Canadian High Commission, and Maria Angelica Ikeda, Brazilian Embassy, and Raul Matamoros from IFAW attended the briefing. Also present was Hilary Thompson, Trevor Salmon, Jane Whitey and Nick Williams from Defra, Christine Dawson and David Grier from OES/ETC, and Jason Hahn, Embassy London ESToff. The briefing followed two days of meetings between Defra and OES officials on CAWT. The briefing opened with a brief explanation of CAWT's purpose from Hilary Thompson and then a description of CAWT's history and origins from Christine Dawson. Dawson and Thompson laid out a CAWT's schedule of meetings with a working officials' meeting on November 20 and 21 which will discuss both CITES and CAWT and a ministerial launch event for CAWT in the first week of January 2007. Attendees were also invited to review and pose questions on the draft statement which details CAWT's goals and the points to which CAWT's partners agree.

¶3. A number of questions were posed on CAWT's proposed structure including whether it would have a secretariat and the status of NGOs within CAWT. Dawson gave examples of other partnerships the U.S. has participated in including the International Coral Reef Initiative and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership as partnerships which do not require permanent secretariats but offer a vehicle for international cooperation on environmental issues. Dawson and Thompson both stated that the role of NGO's within CAWT would be an issue for all members to decide. Dawson and Thompson also clarified that CAWT was concerned only with animals and not with plants. Some participants were confused as wildlife in British English includes both plants and animals.

¶4. Brazil's representative spoke at length on Brazil's efforts to fight illegal wildlife trafficking especially trafficking by organized criminals. She asked if CAWT would address biopiracy and expressed concern that the language in the draft statement was more emphatic on stopping illegal exports than on reducing consumer demand for those exports. The South African representative echoed these concerns and stated it was important CAWT be a true partnership between developing and developed countries and not developed

countries instructing developing countries on what they should do. The South African representative also expressed concern that CAWT, without focus from its partners, could take on too many priorities without enough resources to meet those priorities. She cited the example of the Commonwealth, which according to her, has a multiplicity of priorities without corresponding resources and commitments from member states to meet those priorities.

¶5. A number of representatives asked if changes could still be made to the draft statement and asked about the process for submitting proposed changes. Dawson and Thompson responded that changes were still possible and the draft statement would be submitted to governments for their review before it was adopted at the ministerial meeting in January.

¶6. OES/ETC did not clear on this cable.

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